



EDUCATION SPECIALIST INSTRUCTION CREDENTIAL Requirements for Teachers Prepared Outside of California

California has a two-tier credential structure. A five-year preliminary Level I credential is the first document issued after an individual meets basic credential requirements. The Level II is the professional clear credential which is issued once all credential requirements have been completed.

The Education Specialist Instruction Credential authorizes the holder to teach in the area of specialization listed on the credential in the following settings:

- Special day classes
- Special schools
- Home/hospital settings
- Correctional facilities
- Nonpublic schools and agencies
- Resource rooms

Areas of Specialization

- *Mild/Moderate Disabilities (M/M)*
Includes specific learning disabilities; mild to moderate mental retardation; attention deficit and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders; serious emotional disturbance; and authorizes service in grades K-12 and in classes organized primarily for adults through age 22.
- *Moderate/Severe Disabilities (M/S)*
Includes autism; deaf-blindness; moderate to severe mental retardation; multiple disabilities; serious emotional disturbance; and authorizes service in grades K-12 and in classes organized primarily for adults through age 22.
- *Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)*
Includes deafness; hearing impairment; deaf-blindness; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Visual Impairments (VI)*
Includes blindness; visual impairment; deaf-blindness; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Physical and Health Impairments (PHI)*
Includes orthopedic impairment; other health impairment; multiple disabilities; traumatic brain injury; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)*
Includes the mild/moderate and moderate/severe disabilities listed above, and authorizes service to children ages birth to prekindergarten only.

The credentialing process in California is made up of a sequence of requirements, which the teacher is given up to five years to complete. Teachers receiving the preliminary credential are making a commitment to complete the process and obtain the professional clear credential. The preliminary credential is issued for a maximum of **five years**. If requirements for the professional clear credential are not completed before the expiration of the preliminary, the holder will be unable to teach in California's public schools with that credential until those requirements are met and the document renewed.

Your Application Packet

Individuals who have completed their professional preparation program outside of California may apply directly to the Commission for their initial credential by submitting an application packet consisting of **all** of the following:

1. Completed application ([form 41-4](#), revised 7/05 or later), and, if not previously submitted to the Commission, a completed LiveScan receipt ([form 41-LS](#)). Out-of-state residents have the option of submitting two fingerprint cards in lieu of a LiveScan receipt. If submitting fingerprint cards, current fingerprint processing fees must accompany the application packet in addition to the application processing fee. Fingerprint cards may be ordered by sending a request by e-mail to caworders@ctc.ca.gov.
2. Full application [processing fee](#)

3. Official transcripts, letters of experience, copies of out-of-state credentials, and/or rigorous performance evaluations, as required by the option you apply under. California has five options for qualifying for out-of-state prepared education specialists. Review each of the five options to determine which option is best for you.

Option 1

Out-of-State Trained Applicants with Five or More Years of Out-of-State Teaching Experience

Requirements for the Five-Year Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential

Individuals prepared outside of California who verify five years or more of full-time teaching experience in another state or U.S. Territory in the subject area of the credential sought, may qualify for a California teaching credential by documenting **all** of the following:

1. Baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally-accredited college or university
2. A professional preparation program in special education completed outside of California, consisting of a minimum of 24 semester units, including completion of a supervised field study with a grade of “C” or better
3. Issued or eligible for a comparable teaching credential from another state
4. Five years or more of full-time teaching experience (See [Terms and Definitions](#)) in the subject of the credential sought
5. Evidence of rigorous performance evaluations (See [Terms and Definitions](#)) on which the applicant received a rating of “satisfactory” or better

Requirements for the Professional Clear Level II Education Specialist Instruction Credential for Those Qualifying Via Option 1

Individuals will need to complete **all** of the following to qualify for the Level II:

1. Pass the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) during the first year of certification (unless passage was verified with the issuance of the Level I credential). CBEST must be passed within one year of the issuance date of the Level I credential in order for the holder to be eligible to continue teaching. (For more information, contact the CBEST Program, National Evaluation Systems, Inc., P.O. Box 340880, Sacramento, CA 94834-0880, (916) 928-4001, (800) 262-5080, or visit their website at www.cbest.nesinc.com.)
2. Possess the Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential based on five or more years of teaching experience
3. Complete 150 clock hours of activities that contribute to the individual’s teaching competence, performance, effectiveness, and that assist the applicant in meeting or exceeding standards for professional preparation established by the Commission (These activities must be documented on CCTC form [CL-820A](#) and verified by the employer’s director of curriculum and instruction in the subject area listed on the credential. See the Commission’s website for this form.)

Option 2

Out-of-State Trained Applicants with Three or Four Years of Out-of-State Teaching Experience

Requirements for the Five-Year Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential

Individuals prepared outside of California who verify three years or four years of full-time teaching experience in another state or U.S. Territory in the subject area of the credential sought may qualify for a California teaching credential by documenting **all** of the following:

1. Baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally-accredited college or university
2. A professional preparation program in special education completed outside of California, consisting of a minimum of 24 semester units, including completion of a supervised field study with a grade of “C” or better
3. Issued or eligible for a comparable teaching credential from another state
4. Three or four years of full-time teaching experience (See [Terms and Definitions](#)) in the subject of the credential sought

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5. Evidence of rigorous performance evaluations (See [Terms and Definitions](#)) on which the applicant received a rating of “satisfactory” or better

Requirements for the Professional Clear Level II Education Specialist Instruction Credential for Those Qualifying Via Option 2

Individuals will need to complete **all** of the following to qualify for the Level II:

1. Pass the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) during the first year of certification (unless passage was verified with the issuance of the Level I credential). CBEST must be passed within one year of the issuance date of the Level I credential in order for the holder to be eligible to continue teaching. (For more information, contact the CBEST Program, National Evaluation Systems, Inc., P.O. Box 340880, Sacramento, CA 94834-0880, (916) 928-4001, (800) 262-5080, or visit their website at www.cbest.nesinc.com.)
2. Possess the Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential based on three or four years of teaching experience
3. Complete a two year Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) induction program, documented by a letter signed by the employer’s BTSA program director on the employer’s official letterhead (See [Terms and Definitions](#).)

Option 3

Out-of-State Applicants Who Have Completed a Program in a State Determined to have Equivalent Standards

Requirements for the Five-Year Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential

Individuals must satisfy **all** of the following requirements:

1. Baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally-accredited college or university
2. A professional preparation program in special education completed on or after January 1, 1997 from a state determined to have equivalent standards to the California Education Specialist Credential. (Verified by either a copy of the certificate from the equivalent state or eligibility letter from the institution where the program was completed or the state agency responsible for issuing the certificate.) The out-of-state special education program must be in the specialization area of the Education Specialist Instruction Credential requested. See [Table](#) to determine which state and specific areas of specialization have been approved for this option.
3. Issued or eligible for a comparable teaching credential from another state

Requirements for the Professional Clear Level II Education Specialist Instruction Credential for Those Qualifying Via Option 3

Individuals will need to complete **all** of the following to qualify for the Level II:

1. Pass the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) during the first year of certification (unless passage was verified with the issuance of the Level I credential). CBEST must be passed within one year of the issuance date of the Level I credential in order for the holder to be eligible to continue teaching. (For more information, contact the CBEST Program, National Evaluation Systems, Inc., P.O. Box 340880, Sacramento, CA 94834-0880, (916) 928-4001, (800) 262-5080, or visit their website at www.cbest.nesinc.com.)
2. Possess the Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential from a state determined to have an equivalent standard
3. Complete a course in Computer Education, including instruction in general and specialized skills, in the use of computers in educational settings
4. Complete a Level II Education Specialist Program at a California college or university with a Commission-approved program, including **all** of the following:
 - a. an individualized induction plan designed in collaboration with your employer and a California college or university with a Commission-approved education specialist program in the disability area listed on your Preliminary Level I credential and obtain the formal recommendation for the credential by the college or university where the individualized induction plan was completed

- b. a minimum of two years of successful experience in a public school, nonpublic school, or private school of equivalent status, while holding the Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential, verified by your employer
5. Individuals trained outside of the U.S. must complete a course in Health Education, including, but not limited to, nutrition; the physiological and sociological effects of alcohol, narcotic, and drug abuse, and the use of tobacco (This requirement must include verification of training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR] that covers infant, child, and adult CPR skills. Submit a copy of the course description and CPR card for evaluation purposes.)

Option 4

Out-of-State Trained Applicants with Less than Three Years of Out-of-State Teaching Experience or from a State without Equivalent Standards

Requirements for the Five-Year Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential

Individuals must satisfy **all** of the following requirements:

1. Baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally-accredited college or university
2. A professional preparation program in special education completed outside of California, consisting of a minimum of 24 semester units, including completion of a supervised field study with a grade of “C” or better
3. Issued or eligible for a comparable teaching credential from another state

Requirements for the Professional Clear Level II Education Specialist Instruction Credential for Those Qualifying Via Option 4

Individuals will need to complete **all** of the following to qualify for the Level II:

1. Pass the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) during the first year of certification (unless passage was verified with the issuance of the Level I credential). CBEST must be passed within one year of the issuance date of the Level I credential in order for the holder to be eligible to continue teaching. (For more information, contact the CBEST Program, National Evaluation Systems, Inc., P.O. Box 340880, Sacramento, CA 94834-0880, (916) 928-4001, (800) 262-5080, or visit their website at www.cbest.nesinc.com.)
2. Possess the Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential
3. Developing English Language Skills, including Reading -- individuals must satisfy **one** of the following requirements:
 - a. complete a course in Developing English Language Skills, including Reading, that is research-based and includes the study of phonemic awareness, spelling patterns, early intervention techniques, ongoing diagnostic techniques, and a strong literature, language, and comprehension component (submit a copy of the course description for evaluation purposes)
 - b. pass the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA). Visit the National Evaluation Systems’ (NES) website at www.rica.nesinc.com for more information.
4. Provisions and Principles of the U.S. Constitution – individuals must satisfy **one** of the following requirements:
 - a. complete a course (at least two semester units or three quarter units) in the Provisions and Principles of the U.S. Constitution (submit a copy of the course description for evaluation purposes) from a regionally-accredited college or university
 - b. pass an examination in the Provisions and Principles of the U.S. Constitution given by a regionally-accredited junior college, community college, college, or university
5. Subject Matter Competence – individuals must satisfy **one** of the following requirements:
 - a. achieve a passing score on the appropriate subject matter examination(s). (Information regarding the appropriate subject matter examination[s], including passing scores and registration, can be found in Verifying Subject Matter Competence by Examination leaflets [CL-674M](#) [Multiple Subject] and [CL-674S](#) [Single Subject] which may be obtained by visiting the Commission’s website at www.ctc.ca.gov.)
 - b. complete a Commission-approved subject-matter competence program or its equivalent and obtain verification of completion from the authorized person in the education department of a California college or

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university with an approved program. However, the availability of subject matter programs at California colleges or universities may be limited as they continue to phase out programs.

- c. for specialized science subjects only, individuals may take and pass the appropriate subject matter examinations or obtain verification of completion of subject-matter course work from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Information, including requirements and procedures can be found in [Coded Correspondence 03-0010](#).

► *Verification of Subject-Matter Competence is **not required** for the area of Early Childhood Special Education.*

6. Complete at least three semester units in non-special education pedagogy related to teaching basic academic skills and content areas
7. Supervised field experience in non-special education. Individuals must satisfy **one** of the following requirements:
 - a. complete at least one semester unit of supervised field experience with non-special education students, verified by transcript
 - b. complete 45 clock hours with non-special education students, verified by your employer
8. Complete a course in Computer Education, including instruction in general and specialized skills, in the use of computers in educational settings
9. Complete a Level II Education Specialist Program at a California college or university with a Commission-approved program, including **all** of the following
 - a. an individualized induction plan designed in collaboration with your employer and a California college or university with a Commission-approved program in the area of specialization listed on your Preliminary Level I Credential (This plan will include academic requirements applicable to all Level II candidates, as well as individualized studies and consultations focusing on your specific needs and employment assignment. This plan may contain up to 25 percent non-university-based activities, if approved by the college or university administering the program.)
 - b. a minimum of two years of successful experience in a public school, nonpublic school, or private school of equivalent status, while holding the Preliminary level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential, verified by your employer
 - c. obtain the formal recommendation for the credential by the college or university through which your induction plan was completed
10. Individuals trained outside of the U.S. must complete a course in Health Education, including, but not limited to, nutrition; the physiological and sociological effects of alcohol, narcotic, and drug abuse, and the use of tobacco (This requirement must include verification of training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR] that covers infant, child, and adult CPR skills. Submit a copy of the course description and CPR card for evaluation purposes.)

[Click Here for Commission-Approved Professional Preparation Programs](#), or visit the Commission's website at www.ctc.ca.gov

OPTION 5

Out-of-State Trained Applicants with National Board for Professional Teaching Standard Certification

Individuals who are certified by the [National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](#) in the qualifying subject listed below will be issued a Professional Clear Level II Education Specialist Instruction Credential. This includes those individuals who obtained National Board Certification after their California Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential was issued. Individuals meeting this option are exempt from CBEST and all other credential requirements.

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National Board Certification

Exceptional Needs/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood

Individuals qualifying via Option 5 may apply directly to the Commission for their credential. The application packet must include all of the following:

1. Photocopy of National Board Certification
2. Completed application ([form 41-4](#), revised 7/05 or later), and, if not previously submitted to the Commission, a completed LiveScan receipt ([form 41-LS](#)). Out-of-state residents have the option of submitting two fingerprint cards (FD-258) in lieu of a LiveScan receipt. If submitting fingerprint cards, current fingerprint [processing fees](#) must accompany the application packet.
3. Full application [processing fee](#)

Individuals who hold National Board Certification in the area of Special Education will be issued the specific California special education authorization based upon the course work completed within the teacher preparation program. All course work must be submitted on official transcript from a regionally-accredited college or university.

Course Work Submitted for a Credential

Individuals must have an overall grade point average of “C” or better on a five-point scale in all course work offered toward fulfillment of credential requirements. Continuing education units (CEU’s) and professional development units are not acceptable to fulfill credential requirements. A course description or a letter from the appropriate department chairperson verifying the content of the course work should be enclosed with the credential application for specific course requirements, such as Developing English Language Skills, including Reading, U.S. Constitution, non-special education pedagogy, and supervised field experience.

Terms and Definitions

Full-time Teaching Experience: This experience must be full-time teaching; no part-time or a combination of teaching and other school employment will be accepted. All experience must be gained in regionally-accredited public schools or regionally accredited private schools in states or U.S. Territories other than California. This experience must be verified by the superintendent, assistant superintendent, or director of personnel on the official letterhead of the district or districts where you were employed.

Rigorous Performance Evaluations: Copies of two years of full-time teaching performance evaluations must be submitted with written verification of their authenticity by a personnel officer in the district where the evaluations took place. At least one of the evaluations must have been conducted within the last two years of teaching. Evaluation ratings must be “satisfactory” or better.

The teaching effectiveness areas on the performance evaluation must include, but are not limited to the following:

- The use of teaching strategies that motivate all students to engage in the learning process
 - The ability to establish and maintain high standards for student behavior
 - A demonstration of deep knowledge of the subject taught and the use of appropriate instructional strategies that promote student understanding
 - An ability to plan and implement a sequence of appropriate instructional activities
- *If these areas are not included in the evaluation, the applicant would **not** qualify under these requirements*

The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program: This is an organized program which meets the induction option. There are planned events (assignments/assessments/reviews) during the program, but the activities between those events are individualized to meet the teacher’s needs. The BTSA program involves basic teaching strategies and advanced issues, including California’s curriculum standards and language and cultural diversity in California, which may be of benefit to any teacher new to the state.

Reference: California Education Code, Sections 44227, 44274, 44274.1, 44275.3, and 44275.4, and Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 80048.3.1 – 80048.6

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TABLE

Commission Equivalence for Out-of-State Special Education Preparation Programs Completed after January 1, 1997

The following table identifies Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs in other states that have been determined by the Commission to be equivalent for the purposes of applying for the California Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential in the authorizations indicated. ([See key.](#))

Alabama.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, PHI, VI, ECSE
Alaska	
Arizona	
Arkansas	DHH, VI, ECSE
Colorado.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, PHI, VI, ECSE
Connecticut.....	
Delaware	M/M, VI
District of Columbia	
Florida	M/M, DHH, PHI, VI
Georgia.....	M/M, DHH, PHI, VI
Hawaii	M/M, M/S
Idaho.....	
Illinois.....	
Indiana.....	M/M, DHH, VI
Iowa	M/M, M/S, DHH, PHI, VI, ECSE
Kansas	
Kentucky	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI
Louisiana	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI, ECSE
Maine	ECSE
Maryland	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI, ECSE
Massachusetts	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI
Michigan.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, PHI, VI, ECSE
Minnesota	
Mississippi	
Missouri.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, PHI, VI
Montana.....	M/M
Nebraska.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI, ECSE
Nevada.....	
New Hampshire	M/M, DHH
New Jersey.....	
New Mexico	M/M
New York.....	
North Carolina	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI, ECSE
North Dakota	M/M, M/S, DHH, PHI, VI, ECSE
Ohio	
Oklahoma	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI
Oregon.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI
Pennsylvania.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI
Rhode Island.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI, ECSE
South Carolina.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI
South Dakota	M/M, DHH, ECSE
Tennessee.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, PHI, VI, ECSE
Texas.....	
Utah	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI, ECSE
Vermont	
Virginia.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, VI, ECSE
Washington	
West Virginia.....	
Wisconsin.....	M/M, M/S, DHH, ECSE
Wyoming	M/M, DHH, VI, ECSE

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KEY

California Title

M/M *Mild/Moderate Disabilities*
M/S *Moderate/Severe Disabilities*
DHH *Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing*
PHI *Physical and Health Impairments*
VI *Visual Impairments*
ECSE *Early Childhood Special Education*
I..... *Internship*

Federal Disability Categories

M/M..... *Specific learning disability, mental retardation (mild/moderate), serious emotional disturbance*
M/S *Mental retardation (moderate/severe), serious emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, autism, deaf-blindness*
DHH *Deafness or hearing impairment, deaf-blindness*
PHI..... *Multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, traumatic brain injury*
VI..... *Deaf-blindness, visual impairment including blindness*
ECSE *Birth through pre-kindergarten: mental retardation, serious emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, autism, deaf-blindness*